



## TANA HIGH-LEVEL FORUM ON SECURITY IN AFRICA

### Tana 2012 Discussion Panels

#### Theme 2: State Fragility (15<sup>th</sup> April 2012)

##### Introductory Remarks by Dr. Funmi Olonisakin

It is very difficult to dispute the fact that Africa has been the guinea pig for the last two decades or so for the rest of the world for very obvious reasons. When it comes to trying to define matters of international security, we have externally driven notions of what security is, what human security is, what a fragile state is. We are not short of labels or language to describe what African states are in a sense. I think it is important to have an internal conversation, to interrogate some of these notions. I think we have a setting in which we can do so, a perfect setting in which to do so today. So, what are fragile states? Typically, there are four things that the World Bank and the rest of the world and most of us who have tried to critic these would see.

1. States that do not really efficiently or equitably deliver services
2. States that are not monopolizing the means of violence
3. States that are not sufficiently democratic
4. States that rely on patronage systems and are highly corrupt.

These are some of the things you hear in those definitions. And that is not all; I just wanted to highlight those four. When we have proposed solutions, you have your booklets in front of you, we know that the World Bank Report last year was on conflict, security and development. Some of the proposals that have been offered typically follow a certain set of norms.

First, let us try and strengthen legitimate institutions. Second, we talk about elite bargains a lot. And many people would tell you what we need is an inclusive, elite bargain. But what is an inclusive elite bargain?

I would ask us this morning to move away from trying to define what state fragility is or is not, because we may use most of our time this morning doing that. But what I want to underscore are few questions to kick start the conversation which I know that our capable and eminent panel will be able to respond to concretely. Whatever the label or the remedy that is being proposed, I think we, as Africans, need to ask ourselves the following questions, among others of course.



## TANA HIGH-LEVEL FORUM ON SECURITY IN AFRICA

Are states fragile only because there is conflict, open conflict? Should we also talk about situations that are not of open conflict? We have heard that armed conflict has decreased significantly and yes, they have, but we have seen states retreat to a situation of no war no peace. I think we really need to reflect on that. Why do we have more than a few African countries, I would say a substantial number of African countries who face crises of authority and legitimacy. Why do I say that? It is because in some places, you have formal civic state institutions who are struggling to command the loyalty and commitment of their citizens. That is the case and I think that is the question we need to put on the table. Why is that the case? Why therefore do we have many non-state systems that are able to purchase the loyalty of citizens and populations? Why do we have that situation?

Two more questions before I turn over to the panel. If we accept the argument that the solution is to build legitimate institutions, are we saying we ought to be building legitimate non-state institutions that are able to command the loyalty of the citizens?

And lastly, it's being said that, African states rely on patronage a lot and they are corrupt. But can we challenge this? Is patronage necessarily a bad thing? Can we efficiently and effectively use it as a starting point to rebuild the systems and legitimacy, or at least build the loyalty and commitment of citizens?

These are the questions we need to look at.

### Discussion Contributors

- Dr. Funmi Olonisakin
- Mrs. Luisa Diogo
- Dr. Abdalla Hamdok
- Amb. Ramtane Lamamra
- Former President Thabo Mbeki
- Prime Minister Meles Zenawi
- Amb. Michael A. Battle
- Mr. Daniel Adugna
- President Sheik Ahmed



## TANA HIGH-LEVEL FORUM ON SECURITY IN AFRICA

- Mr. Abd-el Naceur Belaid
- Former President Olusegun Obasanjo
- Mr. Abdoulie Janneh
- Mr. Musa Soko
- Mr. Zachary Muburi-Muita
- Professor Ndioro Ndiaye
- Dr. Nkosana D. Moyo
- Dr. Jean Bosco Butera

### **Chair**

- Dr. Funmi Olonisakin

### **Panelists**

- H.E. Luisa Diogo
- Amb. Ramtane Lamamra
- Former President Thabo Mbeki